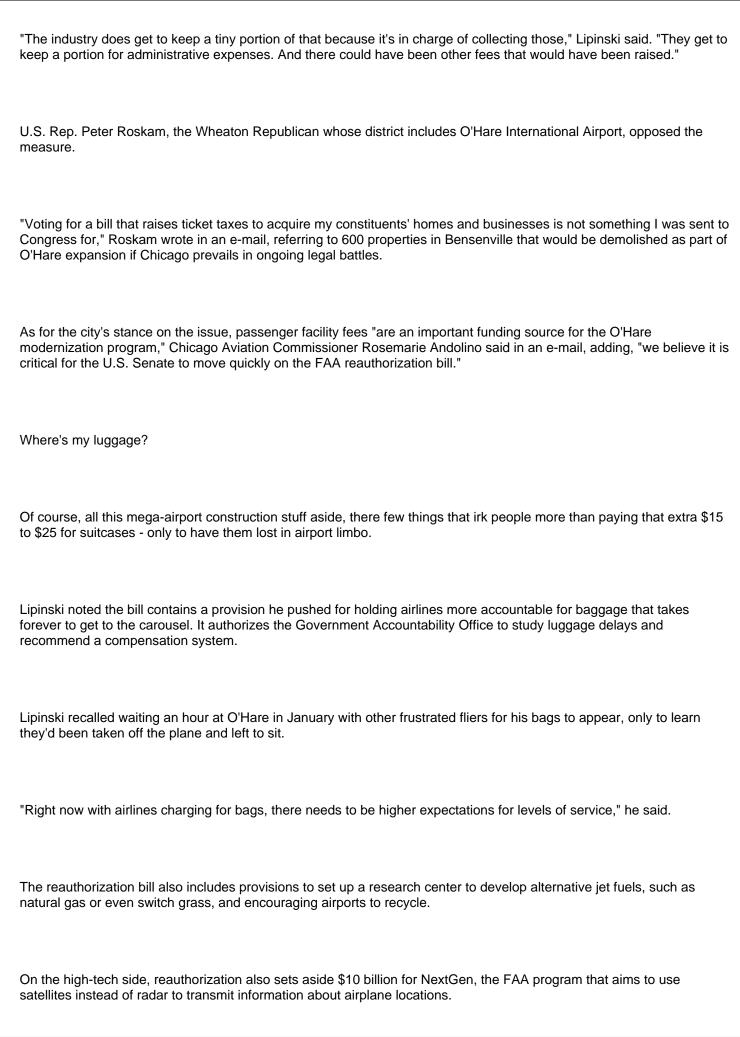
## (June 2, 2009) FAA reauthorization could fast-forward O'Hare runways

Were you waiting with breathless anticipation for the U.S. House to pass the FAA reauthorization bill?
I was and here's why.
It's been about two years since the policy, which funds the Federal Aviation Administration, expired. Although Congress keeps giving the agency enough money to keep running annually, lack of actual, long-term revenue hampers progress on major aviation issues.
The legislation still needs Senate approval but the House version passed May 21. Highlights include \$53.5 billion for capital programs from 2010 to 2012 with \$12.3 billion allocated for airport improvements.
The bill includes authorizing airports to raise passenger facility charges - fees placed on tickets to pay for improvements - from \$4.50 to \$7.
I asked Rep. Dan Lipinski, a suburban Democrat and member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, what the legislation means for this region.
"It means O'Hare can bring in more revenue that can go toward the modernization project," Lipinski said Friday, referring to Chicago's plan to create six parallel runways and a western terminal. "If O'Hare raises passenger facility charges to \$7, it will mean almost \$70 million more that will be collected a year."
That would be in addition to extra dollars being pumped into the FAA's airport improvement program, Lipinski added.
The move is significant for Chicago, which has built one new runway, extended another and has four to go with project costs estimated at \$8 billion and counting.
However, the airline industry is already making noise about higher passenger fees, arguing it will drive fliers away during troubled economic times.

http://www.lipinski.house.gov Powered by Joomla! Generated: 25 June, 2009, 08:45



http://www.lipinski.house.gov Powered by Joomla! Generated: 25 June, 2009, 08:45



http://www.lipinski.house.gov Powered by Joomla! Generated: 25 June, 2009, 08:45